

## **Draft**

# **Phase III Work Element Proposal for the Washington State Long-term Air Transportation Study**

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**December 2006**

## **Project Description**

This project focuses on Phase III of the Washington State Long-Term Air Transportation Study (LATS). Phase III will integrate the data and findings from Phases I and II into a final aviation system plan document. The aviation system plan is a study that documents existing air transportation conditions, system dynamics, performance, trends and market factors within the Washington State airport system. LATS will identify how the system meets current air transportation demand and what will be needed to meet future statewide and regional demand. Study recommendations and findings will be integrated into the Washington Transportation Plan (WTP), the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS), and regional and local transportation plans. The study will also assist in aligning federal, state, and regional objectives and priorities and help clarify airport sponsor objectives.

LATS will be developed consistent with Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill (ESSB) 5121 and Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) Advisory Circular (AC) 150/5070-7 “The Airport System Planning Process.” The FAR identifies all FAA advisory circulars, FAA orders and other guidance materials necessary to develop a State Aviation System Plan with FAA AIP Funds.

## **Project Overview**

In 2005, the Governor signed into law ESSB 5121, which authorizes a long-term air transportation planning study for general aviation and commercial airports statewide. The primary focus of the study is on commercial aviation as well as on the four-regions identified in the legislation: Tri-cities, Spokane, Puget Sound and southwest Washington.

## **Project Goals**

- Define overall system plan policies and strategies to implement proposed actions needed to meet Washington’s long-term air transportation needs
- Identify and develop capital cost estimates for statewide and regional air transportation capacity and facility needs to 2030.
- Involve stakeholders in the process for feedback.

## **Project Elements**

The following proposed project elements will be transformed in to a detailed scope of work, work delivery plan and work program for Phase III when the project is initiated in 2007:

### **Element      Aviation Planning Council Formation**

Review recommendations provided to the governor on selecting members of the aviation planning council. Authorized by legislation (ESSB 5121) the governor will appoint a ten-member aviation planning council to provide recommendations on how best to meet the statewide commercial and general aviation capacity needs to meet future demand until 2030. The recommendations will be based on the findings of Phase I and II of the study. In accordance with the legislation members of council are to consist of the following or their designee:

- WSDOT Aviation Director
- Director of CTED
- Member of Transportation Commission
- Two members of general public
- FAA technical expert
- Commercial airport operator
- Member of GMA hearings board
- WAMA representative
- Airline representative

The member from the Transportation Commission shall chair the council. The council is required to submit their recommendations to the legislature, governor, Transportation Commission and regional transportation planning organizations by July 1, 2009.

### **Element      Set up Aviation Planning Council and Review Decision Making, Communication Plan and Public Outreach Strategies**

Review and amend as necessary the draft decision process, briefing materials, operating guidelines and communication plan that were developed in Phase II. This task should identify a clear and comprehensive approach on the meeting framework of the council and will be finalized through the council process. The communication plan should identify strategies that will provide opportunities for public and stakeholder input on transportation policies, system alternatives and implementation strategies. The communication plan should be a multi-faceted strategy maximizes input to the planning process on the strengths, weakness and opportunities of the aviation system.

### **Element      Review Previous Studies**

Review previous studies and supporting documentation that was prepared for Phase I and Phase II of LATS for consideration by the Aviation Planning Council. Phase I

details the current system capacity and overall condition of the state's airports and services. The baseline information was collected from each airport through an enhanced airport assessment survey, review of existing master plans, airport layout plans and other supporting documentation. This task will also identify and summarize airport roles and performance measures to assist in identifying the interaction between airports as well as facility and service gaps across the state. Phase I of the report focused on "what we have".

Phase II provides analysis for general aviation and commercial airports and focuses on what we need to meet aviation demand to 2030. A market analysis was also conducted for commercial service airports. System plan forecasts were prepared for five, ten, 20 and 25-year periods and specifies aircraft mix, based aircraft, airport operations, passenger boardings and cargo. Forecasts were prepared in accordance with approved methodology and compared to the FAA's Terminal Area Forecast for reasonableness. Steps in the preparation of Phase II also included identifying airport roles, performance objectives and options for meeting statewide and regional aviation needs. A high-speed passenger rail assessment was also conducted.

#### **Element      Database and Web Site Upgrades**

Improve the structure and functionality of the Aviation System Plan Database. Website upgrades will be included to enhance existing online reporting functions. This project element will improve WSDOT Aviation's ability to utilize aviation system data and expand public access to technical information.

#### **Element      Review and Evaluate GA and Commercial Aviation**

Review, evaluate and update as necessary information that was generated in Phase II on regional and national aviation industry trends. Future trends serve as one of the inputs for establishing performance objectives for airports across the state and for determining potential air travel demand at local communities and metropolitan areas. This task will summarize the full range of regional and national trends for general aviation and commercial passenger service.

#### **Element      Policy Review and Development**

One of the purposes of the aviation system plan will be to identify policies that will define the state's interest and responsibility for its air transportation. Over the last five years there have been significant changes in the regional and national aviation industry. The purpose of this task would be to re-evaluate and amend as needed existing state transportation policies to ensure that the state's interest in air transportation is being met or will be met over the next 25-years. The state's air transportation policies were last updated in 1998 with support from the Washington Transportation Commission. Since that time, new technologies, security, increases in corporate aviation activity, changing trends in scheduled passenger service activity and new aircraft types have occurred putting more demand on the current aviation system.

### **Element      Identify Other Supporting Documentation and Data Analysis**

Identify any additional aviation related data based on new and amended state and aviation policies developed in the previous task. This task would also review and identify environmental and political issues that may affect the feasibility of various aviation options, which may constrain the aviation system. New data and documentation will be organized in a manner that identifies what the data needs are, how the data will be used, what it will be used for, where it is located and the level and cost to obtain it. Consideration of new data will be identified with input from the Council. The public's input will also be solicited on the importance of key elements.

### **Element      NPIAS Review and Recommendations**

An important function of the state planning process is to identify airports that meet national interest criteria. Therefore the purpose of this task will be to review Phase II analysis and provide recommendations to the FAA on the assessment of the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). The NPIAS criteria and procedures are set forth within FAA Order 5090.3 *Field Formulation of the National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems*. Each airport that the system plan recommends for inclusion in the NPIAS will include a service level and role based on the definitions set by the FAA. Currently there are 65 airports in the state that are recognized by the FAA as having national strategic importance. These airports come in a variety of sizes and include airports as small as Davenport Municipal Airport to as large as Sea-Tac International Airport.

### **Element      Statewide Aviation Capital Improvement Program (ACIP)**

Identify procedures and analytical tools to develop a multi-year Statewide ACIP to assist in identifying airport improvement priorities to support statewide and regional alternative analysis. Federal and state criteria and performance objectives will be used to evaluate projects based on local project priorities and federal and statewide interests.

### **Element      Development of State Aviation System Alternatives**

The Aviation Planning Council will initiate a detailed review of the recommended aviation strategies developed in Phases I and II and develop proposed statewide and regional system plan alternatives for meeting the state's need to 2030. Recommended alternatives will be based on airport classifications, overall transportation policies and federal guidelines with generalized cost estimates to evaluate the financial feasibility of the proposed improvements. The alternatives should consider short term, mid term and long-term (25-year) planning periods for commercial, general aviation, air cargo and schedule passenger service. For purposes of scoping, alternatives would consist of several packages based on a full range of options that include generalized capital costs, aviation safety, airspace utilization, ability to address forecast need, delay and other

issues identified by the Council. Military base utilization should also be considered. Proposed alternatives would be disseminated to stakeholders and the public for review and comments. Based on the system plan analysis and input from the FAA, stakeholders, and the public the council will identify a package of selected alternatives that address the future needs of the aviation system statewide and by region, and include a no-action alternatives. Consideration would also be given to financial constraints and alternative funding.

#### **Element      Develop Funding Packages and Determine Legislative Action**

This task will focus on identifying preliminary cost estimates, benefit-cost ratios, and funding and legal analysis of selected funding packages for each alternatives selected by the Council in the above element. Preliminary cost estimates will be based on the capacity and facility needs determined for alternatives recommended by the Council. Potential sources of funding (FAA, State, local, etc) will also be identified using existing and proposed funding sources to implement the preferred system plan alternatives. The identification of potential funding sources will not represent the actual level of participation by Federal, State or local agencies. The estimates will however provide a basis for determining the relative financial viability of selected aviation alternatives. A report will be prepared on the benefit-cost ratios of each alternative as well as analyze the legal foundation and authority to fund the system under current legislation and identify the feasibility of new legislation and funding sources for guidance in making decisions on the preferred alternatives. Cost estimates and cost-benefit analysis will be developed as an order-of-magnitude calculation, as opposed to a design or construction level detail.

#### **Element      Final Report and Recommendations**

The Aviation Planning Council, using public input shall determine the final recommended actions and submit its recommendations to the legislature, governor, Transportation Commission and regional transportation planning organizations by July 1, 2009. The final proposal would include recommendations as outlined in legislation which are summarized as follows:

- How best to meet the statewide commercial and general aviation capacity and facility needs;
- A determination of which regions of the state are in need of improvements regarding the matching of existing, or projected airport facilities and the long-term capacity needs at airports within the region expected to reach capacity before the year 2030; and
- Identification of future commercial and general aviation airport facilities designed to meet the need for improved aviation planning in the region.

The final Washington State Long-term Air Transportation Plan will be revised based on final action by the governor and legislature. The comments and responses from

stakeholders, public, and regional transportation planning organizations will be noted with the Appendix of the plan.

### **Deliverables**

- Final State Air Transportation System Plan
  - Air transportation policies
  - Airport classification and performance objectives
  - Air transportation capital facility plan process
  - Air transportation capital facility needs and costs
- Interactive airport facilities database and web access
- Air transportation system plan alternatives analysis
- Legislative package
- Executive summary report
- Appendix with supporting documentation